

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 RSC-01 SSO-00 ISO-00 /017 R

16621

DRAFTED BY: S/S-O:RELTZ

APPROVED BY: S/S-O:RELTZ

----- 045476

O 161016Z JUN 74 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 128481

TOSEC 277

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 8453 SENT ACTION SECSTATE, PARIS INFO
ANKARA, ATHENS, BRUSSELS, COPENHAGEN, THE HAGUE, LISBON,
LONDON, LUXEMBOURG, MOSCOW, OSLO, OTTAWA, REYKJAVIK, ROME,
NATO, EC BRUSSELS, BERLIN MAY 29,

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 8453

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: PROFILE OF NEW FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JEAN
SAUVAGNARGUES

1. THE DEPARTMENT AND AMEMBASSY PARIS MAY BE INTERES-
TED IN MY IMPRESSIONS OF THE NEW FRENCH FOREIGN
MINISTER, JEAN SAUVAGNARGUES, BASED ON TWO YEARS OF
ASSOCIATION WITH HIM AS A COLLEAGUE IN BONN AND EARLIER
PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS DATING BACK NEARLY 25 YEARS WHEN
HE WAS A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL. AS A MEMBER OF THE
BRITISH, FRENCH AND U.S. TRIUMVIRATE RESPONSIBLE FOR
BERLIN AND ALL-GERMAN MATTERS, SAUVAGNARGUES' CONTACTS
WITH US HAVE BEEN FREQUENT AND CLOSE; HE WAS, OF
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COURSE, ONE OF THE WESTERN NEGOTIATORS OF THE FOUR-

POWER AGREEMENT ON BERLIN.

2. THE EARLY CAREER OF SAUVAGNARGUES, WHO IS 59 YEARS OLD, FOLLOWED THE PRESCRIBED FRENCH MODEL, INCLUDING ATTENDANCE AT THE ECOLE NATIONALE SUPERIEURE WHERE HE MAJORED IN GERMAN AND POLITICAL SCIENCE. HE ENTERED THE FRENCH FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1941, BUT LATER JOINED DE GAULLE TO FIGHT WITH HIM IN NORTH AFRICA. RETURNING TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN THE EARLY POST-WAR PERIOD, FOR SOME TEN YEARS HE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MAJOR FRANCO-GERMAN AND INTRA-EUROPEAN NEGOTIATIONS. HE HAS TOLD ME SEVERAL TIMES HOW, DURING THE LAST DAYS BEFORE THE DEFEAT OF THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMMUNITY BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1954, AS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE TREATY, HE CLASHED WITH THE THEN PRIME MINISTER MENDES-FRANCE. HE WAS ALSO ACTIVE IN NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING FRANCE, THE U.S. AND THE U.K. IN THE POST-WAR GERMAN SETTLEMENTS, INCLUDING THOSE TERMINATING THE OCCUPATION OF THE COUNTRY IN 1949; GERMAN MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMMUNITY, AND THE PARIS AGREEMENTS LEADING TO THE ADMISSION OF GERMANY INTO NATO IN 1955. DURING THIS PERIOD, HE ACQUIRED THE REPUTATION AS SOMEWHAT OF A WONDER CHILD, ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST AND MOST TALENTED MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH DIPLOMATIC SERVICE, OBVIOUSLY DESTINED TO REACH HIGH POSITION. AT 39, HE BECAME FRANCE'S YOUNGEST MINISTER IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE. WITH THE RETURN TO POWER OF PRESIDENT DE GAULLE IN 1958, HOWEVER, HIS CAREER TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE, (HE HAD BROKEN WITH GAULLISM AT AN EARLY POST-WAR STAGE) AND HE EVENTUALLY ENDED UP IN WHAT HE FRANKLY ADMITS WAS HIGH-LEVEL EXILE TO AFRICA WHERE HE SERVED AS AMBASSADOR FOR ELEVEN YEARS IN ETHIOPIA AND TUNISIA, BROKEN BY SOME YEARS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AS HEAD OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS. HE WAS COMPLETELY REMOVED FROM THE EUROPEAN AFFAIRS WITH WHICH HE HAD BEEN SO CLOSELY ASSOCIATED. HIS ASSIGNMENT TO BONN IN MAY, 1970 BECAME POSSIBLE ONLY WITH THE DEPARTURE OF DE GAULLE FROM THE PRESIDENCY.

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3. DURING HIS FOUR YEARS IN BONN, SAUVAGNARGUES WAS A HARD WORKING AMBASSADOR WHO SERVED HIS GOVERNMENT FAITHFULLY, BUT HE WAS CLEARLY NOT AN ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORTER OF THOSE POLICIES OF PRESIDENT POMPIDOU WHICH HE BELIEVED RAN COUNTER TO THE BEST INTERESTS OF EUROPE AND OF EUROPEAN RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. WHATEVER HIS PERSONAL STANDING WITH THE ELYSEE MIGHT HAVE BEEN, IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HIS RECOMMENDATIONS CARRIED

CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND HE WAS FREQUENTLY CONFIDENT THAT LINES HE PURSUED ON A PERSONAL BASIS IN BONN WOULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE ACCEPTED BY HIS GOVERNMENT.

4. IF I WERE TO DESCRIBE HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE U.S., I WOULD SAY THAT IT COMBINES A GENUINE FRIENDSHIP WITH A CRITICAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS CERTAIN AMERICAN POLICIES AND PRACTICES. HE IS NOT ONE OF THOSE PARANOID FRENCHMEN WHO SEES SINISTER MOTIVATION BEHIND INCREASED COCA-COLA SALES OR THE WEARING OF BLUE-JEANS BY FRENCH YOUTH, BUT HE WILL ARGUE THAT FRENCH CULTURE EMOBIES CERTAIN VALUES WHICH NEED TO BE PRESERVED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD. HE IS FULLY AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN EUROPE AND OF THE WORLD-WIDE ROLE OF AMERICAN POWER, ALTHOUGH HE HAS SOMETIME EXPRESSED DOUBTS AS TO OUR CAPACITY TO USE IT WISELY. I DO NOT BELEIVE, HOWEVER, THAT, UNLESS FORCED BY HIS SUPERIORS, HE WOULD PRESS DISTINCTIVELY FRENCH VIEWS WITH RESPECT TO THE U.S. TO THE EXTREME POINTS REACHED BY HIS PREDECESSOR. DURING RECENT MONTHS, WE ARE INFORMED, HE SENT SEVERAL PERSONAL MESSAGES TO JOBERT URGING HIM TO MUTE HIS HOSTILITY TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES. HE HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE EXTREMELY SUSPICIOUS, NONETHELESS, OF THE US-SOVIET BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, AND HAS BEEN OUTSPOKEN IN EXPRESSING THIS SUSPICION FROM TIME TO TIME.

5. AS A PERSON, SAUVAGNARGUES IS NOT PARTICULARLY WARM OR OUTGOING, AND CAN BE SUPERCILIOUS, EVEN ARROGANT, WHEN HE WANTS TO TURN IT ON. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE CAN BE A TRUE FRIEND, AND I HAVE SEEN HIM DEEPLY MOVED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. HE IS, OF
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COURSE, HIGHLY INTELLIGENT, WITH AN ABILITY TO ARTICULATE HIS THOUGHTS PRECISELY. SOME HAVE NOTED AN OCCASIONAL INCONSISTENCY IN POSITIONS WHICH HE HAS TAKEN ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS AND HE SOMETIMES DOES SEEM TO BE CARRIED AWAY BY THE LOGIC OF HIS BRIGHT IDEA OF THE MOMENT WITHOUT APPARENT AWARENESS THAT HIS BEAUTIFULLY STATED POSITION IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE ONE HE TOOK THE DAY BEFORE. THIS TRAIT, IS SHOULD JUDGE, IS NOT A MATTER OF CONSCIOUS INTELLECTUAL DISHONESTY, BUT RATHER THAT OF A MAN SOMETIMES OVERLY FASCINATED WITH THE PLAY OF WORDS. AS A NEGOTIATOR, HE USUALLY STARTS WOUT WITH A FIXED VIEW AND MAY SOMETIMES APPEAR NOT TO HEAR MUCH OF WHAT OTHERS AROUND HIM SAY IN REBUTTAL. BUT HE ALSO HAS A PRAGMATIC STREAÇ, AND CAN WHEN NECESSARY

SHOW A DISPOSITION FOR COMPROMISE. HE CAN BE INGENIOUS IN THINKING UP FORMULATIONS TO SERVE AS A BASIS FOR SUCH COMPROMISE.

6. I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HIS EARLY STRONG SENTIMENTS IN FAVOR OF EUROPEAN UNITY HAVE CHANGED SOMEWHAT IN THE FACE OF RECENT SETBACKS WHICH THE EEC HAS ENDURED, BUT IT MAY WELL BE THAT, UNDER HIS GUIDANCE, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WILL TAKE A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTEGRATIVE STEPS BY THE COMMUNITY. HE IS LIKELY TO SHOW A CONTINUING STRONG INTEREST IN BERLIN MATTERS, AND HIS VIEWS WITH REGARD TO THE UNDESIRABILITY OF ANY ENHANCEMENT OF THE FEDERAL PRESENCE IN THAT CITY AND THE NEED GENERALLY TO AVOID STRAINS ON THE FOUR POWER AGREEMENT ON BERLIN WILL PROBABLY BE A PROMINENT FEATURE OF FRENCH POLICY TOWARDS THAT CITY. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SOME GERMANS IN THE FRG FOREIGN OFFICE CONSIDER THAT HE HAS A FAIRLY HEAVY ANTI-GERMAN STREAK IN HIM, BUT IF SO, HE HAS NOT LET IT WARP HIS JUDGEMENTS. HIS CRITICS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE ARE LIKELY TO QUALIFY IN THIS LIGHT CURRENT SPECULATION THAT HIS APPOINTMENT REFLECTS THE NEW FRENCH LEADERSHIP'S DESIRE FOR CLOSER BONN-PARIS TIES. IN ANY EVENT, SAUVAGNARGUES IS QUITE PROUD OF HIS ATTAINMENTS AS A GERMANIST, AND HIS EARLY LANGUAGE STUDIES PLUS MANY

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YEARS OF USE HAVE MADE HIM HIGHLY PROFICIENT IN GERMAN. HE IS ALSO FLUENT IN ENGLISH.

7. I SHOULD THINK THAT SAUVAGNARGUES HIMSELF IS SOMEWHAT SURPRISED BY HIS APPOINTMENT. HOW HE CAME TO GISCARD'S ATTENTION, I DO NOT KNOW. HE HAS NEVER INDICATED ANY PREVIOUS CLOSE CONNECTION. AS FOREIGN MINISTER, HE WILL MAKE A SOMETIMES INTERESTING, SOMETIMES HELPFUL, AND SOMETIMES EXASPERATING INTERLOCUTOR.

8. MADAME SAUVAGNARGUES IS A HANDSOME, WELL-GROOMED FRENCH LADY, AND A PRACTICING CATHOLIC. SHE HAS NOT FOUND BONN THE MOST FASCINATING CAPITAL IN THE WORLD BUT HAS DONE HER DUTY HERE BETWEEN PERIODS OF ABSENCE. SHE SPEAKS PRACTICALLY NO ENGLISH. HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, CABINET, PRIME MINISTER, TOSEC 277, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE128481
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O:RELTZ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740156-0785
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740641/aaaabirm.tel
Line Count: 218
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <17 JUN 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROFILE OF NEW FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JEAN SAUVAGNARGUES
TAGS: PFOR, GE, (SAUVAGNARGUES, JEAN)
To: DAMASCUS JERUSALEM
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005